

“So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.”

by [Phillip Martin](#) in the [November 3, 2021](#) issue

*for Sophia, on her confirmation*

Sold often by the handful (pocket change  
could purchase just enough for peasant’s lunch)  
these denizens of dusty roadside range  
were no one’s haute cuisine. Assorted bunch  
of species inconspicuous and small—  
White-throated, Swamp, Clay-colored, Field, Song, Sage—  
in color drab as simple in their call,  
this trope of commonplace in every age  
is yet, each one, with thought precisely planned,  
each painted feather, perfect in its place,  
a flawless masterwork. A Master Hand  
has formed each one, bestowed them all with grace.

Then you, moreso redeemed by blood, rejoice,  
and ne’er deny your worth, nor mute your voice.